

The Noble
L I F E

And Character of the Honourable

**Sir Simon
HARCOURT,**

Lord Baron **HARCOURT,**

O F

HARCOURT, in STANTON

In OXFORDSHIRE,

L A T E

Lord Chancellor,

T O G E T H E R

With his Lordship's **S P E E C H,**
made to the Earl of **OXFORD,**
on his Promotion to the Post
of Lord *High-Treasurer* of
G R E A T - B R I T A I N.

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The Noble LIFE, And CHARACTER of, &c

THE Honourable Lord Harcourt, is Descended from the antient and Iustrious Family of the Harcourts in Normandy, who took their Title from a Place of the same Name, within that Duchy, and as well attested Historians commemorate, flourish'd there, long before the Norman Duke's victorious Expedition into England, into which he was attended by Gervase Count de Harcourt, and his two Sons Jeffery the eldest of them, return'd with his Father into Normandy, and from him the present Marshal de Harcourt, Duke and Peer of France, in a direct Line came. But the Younger, Arnold de Harcourt remain'd here, and his Son Robert, married Isabel, the Daughter of Richard Camvile, and of Milisent his Wife,

But to our Subject, for to enumerate the whole Line, to this present Time, wou'd be too tedious and prolix, therefore let this suffice, that this Honourable Family has not for upwards of Three Hundred Years, been without a Knight in it, and that they were always most dutiful and Loyal Subjects, a Testimony of which Sir Simon Harcourt, Grandfather to this present Lord Harcourt may serve, For he was a Gentleman of that Integrity and Zeal for his King, and for his Country, that he constantly accompanied King Charles the First, in all his Troubles, sympathizing in all his Misfortunes, and being almost an equal Partaker in his Calamities, till it pleased God to put an End to his Sorrows and Afflictions, by calling Him to himself, while he fell in the Bed of Honour, being kill'd in an Engagement, whilst he Loyally served the Church, his King, and his Country. He was a Man of a Noble, and of a Generous Temper, Humble without Pride, and Facetious without either Raillery or Immodesty, He was a Man of a steady and even Temper, much addicted to Pery and Learning; He had his Eldest Son and Heir, Sir Philip Harcourt, Father to this present Lord Harcourt; was sent to Pembroke College in Oxford, at the Age of Fourteen, where in his juvenal Years,



he gave early Proofs of future Greatness, being endowed with all the promising Qualities of Wit and Ingenuity; He at the Age of Fifteen Declaimed with such Solidity of Judgement, and loftyness of Expression, that he seemed rather a *Demosthenes*, than a *Freshman*, he by his pleasing Deportment, and winning Behaviour, drew upon him the Admiration of all those who knew him, who esteemed themselves happy in his Company, which was Witty, Innocent, and Facetious. He was observed to be very apt and quick in Apprehending, to which was added, a large Capacity of Retaining, so that while he stayen at the University, he behaved himself to that Admiratiou, that he obtained a general Applause, and his Company was sought by the most Judicious and Discreet, who esteemed themselves happy in his, than from whose Conversation, they could be more edify'd than none, he being endow'd with such extraordinary bright Parts and Qualities, as were most rare to be met with in a Man of his Years; he was always a close Student, from whence he became a profound Scholar. He was also a witty Young Man, tho' Pious, deserving of Honour, but Humble, Submissive in Behaviour, obeying his Superiors, easy, patient, and plyant with his Equals, tho' he was Facetious, yet Modest to his Inferiors, he was Gracious, Good and Merciful, esteeming and admiring every spark of Virtue, which he could see in the meanest object of Pity. Staying as before hinted, at the College, he applyed his himself by his studying Philosophy, he came from Oxford to London, he settled in the Inner-Temple, and remained a Member of that Inn of Court for some time, tho' 'twas not long before he arrived to a competent knowledge of the Law, to Plead at the Bar, where at his first Appearance, his rhetorical Oratorie and Elocution, rendered him as much admired in Town, as he had before been at the College, and in a very short space of Time, he became so popular a Man, that he was justly esteemed the best Council, and for his Pleading, bore the Bell of the Nation, and no Person having a Cause of Moment, was willing to try it, unless Sir Simon Harcourt was on their Side, he making those to tremble by his Ciceroian Oratory, who did dare to withstand him. Yet tho' his Power of Pleading and Elocution was so great, he never

as 'tis observed, espoused a wrong Cause, and tho' he was a Man endowed with such an extraordinary knack of Perswasiveness, he always said, *fiat Justitia*, let Justice be done, for which he was highly esteemed by all good Men. By Queen *ANNE*, whose Name is both Sacred and Immortal, he was highly favoured, being by her created, Baron Harcourt, of Stanton Harcourt, in Oxfordshire, and Solicitor General. He was also, (as several of his Predecessors has been, for a long Series) a Member of Parliament, where his admirable Speeches were very Bright, and rendered him highly esteemed by the whole House, his Speeches being never Mean, Fruitless, and Insignificant, but always concerning something of Moment, and for the generality, tending to the advantage of his Sovereign, the Benefit of the Government, and Good of his Country, from whence he gain'd an universal Applause, of all such who esteemed either Learning, Justice, or Goodness. He was one of the Council which were concerned in behalf of Dr. Sacheverell, to whom he was of admirable Service.

Her Majesty Queen *ANNE*, by whom, as before mentioned, he was highly esteem'd, seeing his Ingenious Temper and natural Disposition for Virtue, Goodness, and Justice, gave him the Great Seal of England to Keep, esteeming none more worthy for so great a Trust, and he faithfully adher'd to the Charge given him. Performing this Office equitably and justly, her Majesty gave him an additional Honour and Charge, for he was made Lord High Chan;

Chancellor of Great Britain, which Post he enjoy'd a very considerable Time, and here it was that he in a more particular manner, gave new Proofs of his integrity, here as in all other parts of Trust, shew'd himself to be a just Steward, keeping the Laws of Justice for his Rule, from whose Paths he never yet deviated, being not subject to the Corruption of Bribes, of which he never received any, nor byas'd by favour or interest of any sort or kind whatsoever, so that in a Word as it more particularly lay in his Power to do Justice, in this his honourable Post, so he always executed it, for wheresoever, or whensoever he found Right like to suffer, he continually espous'd the injur'd partys Cause. and by his Judgment and Experience in the Law, and strength of Argument, drew the Curtain of the Scene, detected the fallacious propositions of the quibbling and unjust Lawyers, laid open and exposed their Villany, extol'd the Right of Justice, and as far as in his Power lay, gave every Man what in Justice was his Right.

It may not here be improper to insert one particular, among the many excellent Deeds of Charity and Goodness he has done.

Upon a certain Day, his Ladys coming out from her Coach, was asked for Alms by a certain decayed Gentlewoman, whose Behaviour I suppose, rendered her worthy his Ladys Observation, who perceived that Begging was an

employ newly taken up by her. And asking her who she was, she told her that she was a Gentlewoman, but through the instability of humane Affairs reduced, that she had an Estate kept from her, thro' her impotency of going to Law for want of Mony, she asked her again dropping her a peice of Mony, if she had any Proof of what she said, and bid her if she had any, to come and wait upon Sir Simon the next Morning; accordingly the Gentlewoman came the next Day, and told Sir Simon, that her Brother had borrowed a small Sum of Mony upon an Estate, of which she was now according to Law, the right Owner of, and that the Mortgage was long since paid of, as also that Sir S—— I G——, who lent the Mony, kept it only out of a pretence that it was Paid, but that the Mortgage had Eat it out, she confess'd she had some small Matter of Money from him, and Meat and Lodging, to the value of about an hundred Pound, she being asked what proof she had, she told him the Names of two very substantial Gentlemen, of whom Sir Simon making it his business to relieve the oppress'd, having enquir'd, found all Verity, and therefore sent Sir S—— I G——, a Letter, to desire him to act the honest and honourable Part, but he refus'd to come to any Agreement, whereupon Sir *Simon Harcourt* put him into Chancery, and follow'd him into the Exchequer, and from one Court to another, 'till he at last obtain'd a Decree in the High Court of Chancery against him, by which Decree, he was oblig'd thro' the Justice and Honour of Sir *Simon*, to give the Gentlewoman her whole Estate, which he recover'd for her; a rare but true instance of Justice. I don't relate this, as the only (but as one among several) good and charitable Actions of my Lord *Harcourt*, whose equal in his Circumstance is very hard to be met with, he being truly pious without Superstition, a Friend without Flattery, Charitable without Ostentation, humble without Pride, meek without Cowardice, Sober without Preciseness, Jocular without Immodicy, Witty without Profaness, Sincere without Hypocrisy, Calm without Moroseness, Sedate without Dulness, Patient without Folly, Cheerful without Levity, and in a Word, a Man of Resolution in all Goodness, the which he undauntedly, and intrepidly undertakes, fearing nothing but God, while he honours his King, and serves his Country, to his utmost Power.

He had by his first Lady five Children, Three Sons; and two Daughters; Simon, Philip, and Walter, which are Dead, but his two Daughters, Anne and Arrabella, are still Living, the one Married, but the other a Maid.

By his Second Wife, he has no Issue.

Sir Simon Harcourt's (late Lord Chancellor of England,) SPEECH, that he made to the Earl of Oxford, on his Promotion to the Post of Lord High Treasurer of England.

My Lord Oxford,

THE QUEEN, who does every thing with the greatest Wisdom, has given a Proof of it, in the Honours she has lately conferred on you, which are exactly suited to your Deserts and Qualifications.

My Lord,

The Title which you now bear, could not have been so justly placed on any other of her Majesty's Subjects. Some of that antient Blood which fills your Veins, is derived from the *VERES*, and you have shew'd your self as ready to sacrifice it for the Safety of your Prince, and the Good of your Country, and as fearless of Danger on the most trying Occasions, as ever any of that Brave and Loyal House were.

Nor is that Title less suited to you, as it carries in it a Relation to one of the chiefe Seats of Learning, for even your Enemies my Lord, (if any such there still are) must own that the Love of Letters, and the Encouragement of those who Excell in them, is one distinguishing part of your Character.

My

My Lord,

The High Station of Lord Treasurer of Great Britain, to which her Majesty has call'd you, is the just Reward of your Eminent Services. You have been the great Instrument of restoring Publick Credit, and Relieving this Nation from the heavy Pressure and Ignominy of an immense Debt, under which it languished, and you are now intrusted with the Power of securing us from a Relapse into the same ill State, out of which you have Rescued Us.

This Great Office, My Lord, is every way worthy of you, particularly on Account of those many Difficulties with which the faithful Discharge of it must be unavoidably attended, and which require a Genius like yours to Master. The only Difficulty which even you My Lord, may find insuperable, is how to deserve better of the Crown and Kingdom after this Advancement, than you did before it.

**FINIS.**